

Claims

[c1] A system for the transfer of data and information between a utility provider and a customer and vice versa, and wherein said system includes a means for transmitting information between the utility provider and the premises of the customer or user and said information is viewable and/or retrievable in the premises via a supplied monitor, home computer, television or any other display and said customer or user is capable of responding via a keyboard or other selection means to allow the customer or user to select a response to the information received.

[c2] A system according to claim 1 wherein the information which is received by the apparatus is provided by the utility provider to the customer or user and relates to the metering of the consumption of the utility or utilities.

[c3] A system according to claim 1 wherein the selection means includes a series of buttons which allow the customer or user to execute commands and responses to the information received.

[c4] A system according to claim 1 wherein the customer or user obtains entry to the system by the introduction of a coded input.

[c5] A system according to any of the preceding claims wherein the customer or user can selectively operate control means for the controlled utility within the premises.

[c6] A system according to claim 1 wherein the display is provided as part of utility consumption metering apparatus in the premises.

[c7] A system according to claim 1 wherein information transmitted from the customer or user to the utility provider includes data relating to metering of the use of at least one utility in the premises, said system allowing the reading and logging of information from all, or a combination of metering apparatus in the premises so as to provide a record of utility usage in any given time period to the utility provider.

[c8] A system according to claim 7 wherein the information is accessible by the

customer or user who can then, on the basis of information received from the utility provider, send a command or selection to one of a range of utility providers via the system to select to receive the said utility from a selected provider.

[c9] A system for metering the use of a plurality of utilities in a premises in which the system allows the reading and logging of information from all, or a combination of metering apparatus in the premises so as to provide a record of utility usage in any given time period and said information is accessible by the user who can then transmit the data to utility providers and/or on the basis of information received from the utility provider, send a command or selection to one of a range of utility providers to designate to receive the said utility from a selected utility provider.

[c10] A system according to claim 9 wherein the utilities of water, gas, electricity, heating and any other utility which uses a supply or can be charged on a time basis is monitored.

[c11] A system according to claim 9 wherein the monitoring data of the usage of the utility or utilities is obtained at pre-designated time intervals of usage of the utility.

[c12] A system according to claim 9 wherein on the basis of the monitoring of the usage of utilities, at least one profile of usage is generated for usage of each utility to allow subsequent setting of utility usage and supply.

[c13] A system according to claim 9 wherein utility usage data is allocated to the usage of apparatus within the premises.

[c14] A system according to claim 13 wherein the usage of a plurality of utilities over the same time period is allocated to the usage of specified apparatus within the premises.

[c15] A system for the transfer of data and information between a utility provider and a customer and vice versa, and wherein said system includes a means for

transmitting information between the utility provider and the premises of the customer and said information is viewable and/or retrievable in the premises via a supplied monitor, home computer, television or any other display.

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